



Ship Fact Sheet



KAISAR-I-HIND (1914)

Base data at 1 October 1914. Last amended September 2011

* indicates entries changed during P&O Group service.

Type	Passenger liner
P&O Group service	1914-1938
P&O Group status	Owned by parent company
Former name(s)	Taj Mahal was considered at one time
Registered owners, managers and operators	The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company
Builders	Caird & Co Ltd
Yard	Greenock
Country	UK
Yard number	327
Registry	Greenock, UK
Official number	128653
Signal letters	JGTR
Call sign	GLVN
Classification society	Lloyd's Register
Gross tonnage	11,430 grt
Net tonnage	5,989 nrt
Deadweight	7,305 tons
Length	158.44m (520.0ft)
Breadth	18.65m (61.2ft)
Depth	11.37m (37.3ft)
Draught	8.839m (29.0 ft)
Engines	Quadruple-expansion steam engines
Engine builders	Caird & Co Ltd
Works	Greenock
Country	UK
Power	14,000 ihp
Propulsion	Twin screw
Speed	18.5 knots
Passenger capacity	315 first class, 233 second class
Cargo capacity	6,313 cubic metres (222,980 cubic feet)
Crew	332 (138 European, 194 Asian). Deck 24 European, 51 Asian; engine room 14 European, 101 Asian; purser's department 118 European, 42 Asian
Employment	UK/Bombay seasonal passenger service

Career

- 20.11.1913: Ordered.
- 28.06.1914: Launched by Miss Edith Cole.
- 01.10.1914: Ran trials and delivered as *Kaisar-i-Hind* for The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company at a cost of £363,176. She had very little cargo space, but was very popular with her passengers, who appreciated the provision of electric fans in every cabin – ‘pretty but not profitable’ is an apt description. Her name is Hindi for ‘Empress of India’ and was previously used by P&O in 1878.
- 1916: Broke the Plymouth/Bombay record on her maiden voyage to Australia in 17 days, 20 hours and 52 minutes. Thereafter spent most of the War on trooping duties mainly to the Mediterranean, carrying British, Indian and French troops.
- 23.03.1916: Missed by a torpedo when between Crete and Malta. She was five times the object of near misses by U-boat torpedoes, reputedly aimed at angles calculated on the speeds of slower P&O vessels. On this occasion she was carrying the Viceroy of India, Lord Chelmsford, his family and suite
- 17.06.1917: Second miss, west of Gibraltar.
- 17.07.1917: Third miss, south-west of the Scilly Isles.
- 18.12.1917: Fourth miss, again west of Gibraltar.
- 22.09.1918: Fifth miss, according to official records, although Company tradition has it that she was actually hit by a torpedo which failed to explode – the ‘lucky’ plates were supposedly painted green and remained so until replaced years later.
- 1919: After the War *Kaisar-i-Hind* spent some time repatriating troops to Australia and India, and suffered an outbreak of plague in the Red Sea.
- 1920: Returned to passenger service, almost entirely on the Bombay run.
- 1921: Chartered to Cunard for at least one round voyage between Southampton and New York under the unofficial name *Emperor of India*, and to the American Tourist Agency for a Norwegian tour, for which her hot weather design rendered her somewhat unsuitable and unpopular since constant fog interfered with her programme. A stokehold explosion during the cruise killed three Indian firemen and badly scalded four engineers.
- 1929: Began Far East sailings.
- 1929: Before becoming a Hollywood actor, David Niven, newly-commissioned in the Highland Light Infantry, joined the ship at Tilbury en route to his regiment in Malta.
- 22.05.1930: Lost port screw between Aden and Port Said. After diver's inspection continued at reduced speed to London where repaired.
- 01.11.1931: Dragged her anchor during high winds in Malta, collided with the Italian ship *Citta di Trieste* and sank several lighters.
- 05.1932: One of six ships that went to the aid of the French liner *Georges Philppar*, on fire in the Gulf of Aden. *Kaisar-i-Hind* patrolled in search of lifeboats and/or rafts believed to be making for the coast, but found none.

- 17.07.1932: On a homeward voyage made P&O's first call at the Port of Tangier in response to appeals from the local British community.
- 21.04.1938: Arrived at Plymouth flying a 22m (72 ft) paying-off pennant, possibly the first time this was done by a P&O ship.
- 22.04.1938: Last arrival at King George V Dock, London. Her baggage master Mr C Osborne had served on every voyage she made - an unsurpassed record.
- 26.04.1938: Sold for £28,500 to Hughes Bolckow Shipbreaking Co Ltd.
- 29.05.1938: Delivered at Blyth.

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